

Good afternoon,

Over the last few weeks it has been on the news, in the newspapers and there has been a lot of discussion by Municipal leaders, Finance Directors, Tax Collectors, etc. in regards to the Governor's proposed bill to reduce the wait time at the DMV by eliminating the need to have municipal motor vehicle property taxes and/or parking tickets paid in full before allowing people to register a vehicle or renew a registration with the DMV.

Once again, let's reward the people who are not doing the things they are supposed to be doing (when they are supposed to be doing them). The people who now only pay their taxes because they cannot get a vehicle registered will NEVER pay their taxes if they are not held up at the DMV.....not ever. And the suckers (I mean good citizens) who do pay their taxes on time will pay more in taxes to make up the shortfall.

I sense there is some misconception in regards to the steps Cities and Towns do take in order to collect delinquent motor vehicle taxes. We mail out tax bills. Most of these tax bills are paid timely. However, for those that are not, we mail a second notice and flag the delinquent accounts with the DMV. For those who still choose to ignore our notices (after at least three tries), we elevate to another level, which in the case of Bloomfield would be using a collection agency. And even after everything we do to try to inspire payment, people still wait until they need to get a car registered before paying the taxes and people still go to the DMV and try to register their vehicle when they have been sent numerous bills from the town. We have people call our office BEFORE they go to the DMV and ask what they owe and then STILL will go to the DMV and try to get through. Others will go to the DMV first and then behave as if the town never notified them of their tax obligation. Passing a law that will help the scofflaws get over is not the way to go.

The flagging of delinquent taxes through the DMV is the MOST effective collection tool the cities and towns have in its efforts to collect vehicle taxes. If it were not for these delinquent tax holds stopping people from renewing registrations or registering new vehicles, millions of municipal tax dollars would go uncollected each year. Today, Bloomfield has over \$850,000 in delinquent motor vehicle taxes from our 2014 Grand List, and hundreds of thousands from prior fiscal years. There are over 4,000 unpaid motor vehicle tax bills from just this year alone. This is town revenue that will never be collected if this bill passes, and the amount will grow higher each year as tax payers figure out they do not need to pay their taxes to get their vehicles registered. Bloomfield uses a collection agency, it goes against people's credit scores, and still the only reason the tax payment comes in is when a registration is stopped at the DMV and the tax payer needs the hold released.

Do people go to the DMV unprepared for the business they went there for? Absolutely! They go there, wait in line, have a problem, hold up the line, probably fuss with the clerk who is there to help, then have to leave the line and take care of all sorts of things from not having the correct paperwork to not having taxes paid or not having emissions done or all of the above, and then they have to get back in line and wait again. Do people come in to the Tax Office without the paperwork or money they should bring to pay their taxes? Absolutely! Does it hold things up? Yes it does! Do some have to leave and then come back? Yes they do! Some transactions are quick and painless while others....not so much. Sometimes you just have to wait in line until the one in front of you is done, no matter how long it takes.

As people get educated and understand all of the wonderful features of the new DMV system, the wait times will be even less than the 30 minutes to one hour they are right now, and the people who are there without compliance issues won't have to wait as long to take care of their business.

The number of people in Connecticut driving unregistered vehicles is epidemic. This is a serious issue totally aside from the tax revenue lost to the Towns. Let's enforce the laws that are on the books now before trying to fix a broken DMV by imposing a law that seriously impacts the Towns.

The DMV should consider bringing back the stickers for both registrations and emissions. By doing this, revenues for both the State and the Cities and Towns will increase and probably far offset the cost of the stickers. Police will better be able to identify unregistered vehicles and enforce the laws. More enforcement, more revenues. If the State of Connecticut is looking for revenues, increase the penalties for late registration renewals. Someone just today registered a vehicle that the registration expired last May. The late charge was \$10. That is not right, it is not a penalty at all. She will end up on our 2015 supplemental tax list for a partial year, so by driving illegally for nine months, she spends a mere \$10 late fee and will save \$150 in vehicle taxes because she is not being taxed for a full year next year. Such a deal.

On a different note, the DMV may want to consider charging a fine if they mail out a renewal form and it is undeliverable due to a bad address. There is a fine for failure to change address with the DMV....why don't/can't they impose it? Stop raising the fees the rest of us have to pay. Just add fines to those who are not doing what they should be doing. That would be a real money maker.

As I stated earlier. The most effective tool the cities and towns have in collecting the municipal motor vehicle taxes is the hold at the DMV. Do not take this away from us. Please urge the opposition of this bill 5055to reduce the wait times at the DMV by eliminating the requirement to have vehicle taxes and/or parking tickets paid before registration will be granted. Passing this bill is not the answer to long lines at the DMV and it will only harm the cities and towns that rely on this revenue.

This is my testimony.

Respectfully,

Jean G. Kitchens

Tax Collector, Town of Bloomfield